KENYA

NATIONAL URBAN SETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

Every City. Every Town. To the Same Standard.

Mji ni Watu. Tunaujenga. Tunauendesha.

The City is its People. We Build It. We Run It.

Cities covered: Nairobi · Mombasa · Kisumu · Nakuru · Eldoret · Thika · Nyeri · Nakuru · Garissa · Isiolo

Plus: Tier 2 & 3 Towns Programme — All 47 Counties

Kenya Settlement Maintenance Corps — 2026

THE NATIONAL URBAN CONTEXT

Kenya has five officially recognised cities — Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, and Eldoret — plus dozens of rapidly growing municipalities and towns. Together they house over 70 percent of Kenya's GDP and a population that will exceed 50 percent of all Kenyans by 2032. How these urban centres function determines whether Kenya's economic growth translates into improved lives or into expanding informal misery.

The diagnosis across all urban centres shares the same core failure: infrastructure built for populations a fraction of current size, sustained by governance structures with neither the mandate nor the resources to maintain what exists or build what is needed. The settlement programme applies the same doctrine to every city — infrastructure first, regulation second; the block as the unit of change; maintenance built in from day one.

~18M	60–80%	<10%	6%	70%	>50%
Kenya's urban population	Living in informal settlements	Mombasa sewerage coverage	Kisumu sewerage coverage	Urban GDP contribution	Projected urban share by 2032

The Nairobi programme — the surgical city doctrine, the six sectors, the Settlement Maintenance Corps — is the national template. Every city in this document applies the same framework adapted to its specific geography, economy, population, and infrastructure condition. The standards are national. The delivery is local.

MOMBASA

City — Kenya's 2nd Largest

The Port City: where the Indian Ocean meets urban Africa

Population: 1.3 million (city); 2M+ metro | Area: 212 km²

The Character of the City

Mombasa is fundamentally different from every other Kenyan city. It is an island — the old town on Mombasa Island connected to the mainland by three bridges and one causeway. It is Kenya's oldest continuously occupied urban settlement, with a UNESCO-listed Old Town dating to the 14th century Swahili trading civilisation. It is the gateway to East Africa through which every import and export passes. And it is the most infrastructure-stressed city in Kenya relative to its population, with the worst sewerage coverage of any major urban centre.

The Specific Diagnosis

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Sewerage	Less than 10% of the city's waste is handled by any formal system — the worst of Kenya's five cities. The island geography makes gravity sewerage engineering uniquely complex. Raw sewage enters the Indian Ocean and the creek systems that surround the island. The coral reef ecosystem — one of Kenya's most important tourism assets — is being destroyed by the city's own untreated waste.	Island-specific sewerage masterplan. Vacuum sewerage technology for the Old Town's narrow lanes where gravity systems are physically impossible. New WWTP on the mainland south shore. Submarine outfall with diffuser for Old Town treated effluent. Condominial systems for informal settlements.
Flooding	Mombasa's flood-prone areas grew by 350% between 1985 and 2015. The island's low-lying areas — Likoni, Tononoka, Kaa Chonjo, Ganjoni — flood severely from tidal surges, creek overflow, and storm drainage failure simultaneously. Climate change is increasing storm surge risk.	Coastal flood barrier design for the most vulnerable creek-side settlements. Tidal gate structures at creek mouths. Stormwater retention chambers at all major low points. Riparian buffer restoration on all creek margins.
Water supply	Mombasa depends on supply piped from far inland — Mzima Springs 170km away. The system is chronically insufficient. Desalination at Diani, Kilifi, and Mombasa itself (four planned plants totalling 300,000 m³/day) is the long-term answer.	Four desalination plants under the coastal desalination programme. Chlor-alkali industry co-location at Mombasa and Diani. Managed aquifer recharge as tertiary buffer.
Transport	The island's road network is the most congested per km² in Kenya. Three crossing points (Nyali Bridge, Makupa Causeway, Likoni Ferry) create chokepoints. Matatus operate in the Old Town's narrow lanes with	Cyclic matatu routes re-engineered around the three crossing points. Likoni ferry as formal transit — dedicated lane on the causeway, ticketing integration. Old Town

	great difficulty.	pedestrian priority zones — matatu-free historic core. Northern bypass improvement.
Old Town	Mombasa's UNESCO Old Town is a national and global heritage asset. Dense Swahili architecture, coral stone buildings, narrow lanes. Inadequate sanitation, no formal waste collection, at risk from sea level rise.	Old Town Conservation and Sanitation Programme: vacuum sewerage for the historic core, pedestrianised main lanes, dedicated heritage maintenance team under the Settlement Maintenance Corps, sea wall reinforcement.
Waste	Industrial port waste, ship waste, and domestic waste all poorly managed. Shanzu, Likoni, and Tudor Creek informal settlements have no collection.	Organic processing facility on mainland south. Jua Kali Recycling Hub at Changamwe. Marine debris collection programme in Tudor and Port Reitz Creeks. Dedicated marine sweeper boats.

The Mombasa Signature Intervention

The Mombasa programme's defining project is the Old Town Sanitation and Pedestrianisation scheme — the most technically challenging urban intervention in the national programme. Vacuum sewerage systems (which do not require gravity gradients and can operate through 14th-century coral stone lanes 2 metres wide) connected to a mainland treatment facility. The lanes pedestrianised. The historic waterfront restored as the city's premier public space. Fort Jesus — East Africa's most visited historic site — given a restored waterfront setting that its current surroundings deny it.

THE MOMBASA DOCTRINE	Mombasa is not a problem city. It is a world city that has been denied the infrastructure its history and economic importance deserve. The Old Town alone is worth more to Kenya's tourism economy than any other single urban asset. It is being destroyed by untreated sewage. Fix the sewage. Restore the waterfront. The economics follow.

KISUMU

City — Kenya's 3rd Largest

The Lakefront City: East Africa's inland port

Population: 400,000 (city); 600,000 metro | Area: 297 km²

The Character of the City

Kisumu is East Africa's principal inland port and Kenya's western economic capital, sitting on Winam Gulf — the easternmost arm of Lake Victoria. Its economy is built on fishing, trade, and regional services. It has one of the most dramatic natural settings of any Kenyan city — the lake, the Nandi Escarpment to the north, the Kano Plains to the east. It also has the lowest sewerage coverage of any major Kenyan city and chronic flooding that destroys its fish markets and displaces its residents with near-annual regularity.

The Specific Diagnosis

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Sewerage	Only 6% of Kisumu's waste reaches any formal treatment. The lowest of all major Kenyan cities. Lake Victoria — Kisumu's primary economic asset, the source of its fish, the basis of its tourism, the drinking water source for millions — receives the city's raw sewage directly. This is the most economically self-destructive infrastructure failure in Kenya: Kisumu is poisoning the lake that feeds it.	Primary trunk sewers along the Auji, Nyamasaria, and Kisat rivers serving the three main drainage catchments. WWTP at Kachok — expansion of the existing facility — and a second facility on the southern lakeshore. Condominial sewerage for Manyatta and Nyalenda informal settlements.
Flooding	Kisumu's low-lying lakeshore and riverside settlements flood regularly. Manyatta and Nyalenda — the city's largest informal settlements — sit in natural drainage depressions. The fish markets on the lakeshore are repeatedly destroyed, forcing communities already dependent on informal income into acute crisis.	Lakeshore flood protection embankment with tidal gates. Manyatta and Nyalenda drainage upgrade — retention ponds at river mouths before they enter the city. Riparian buffer restoration on Auji and Nyamasaria rivers.
Transport	Kisumu's road network is the city's most cited investment barrier. Narrow, poorly maintained roads throughout informal settlements. The lakefront road is the primary artery but lacks the capacity for the city's growth trajectory.	Cyclic matatu route network redesigned around the lakefront spine. Kisumu Port as a transit hub — water taxis connecting lakeside communities. Kisumu Bypass completion to relieve CBD congestion.
Lake economy	Lake Victoria is massively underutilised as an economic asset from Kisumu. The fishing industry is artisanal, cold chain is absent, fish processing is informal. The lakefront is not developed as public space — it is	Kisumu Port upgrade and fish processing cold chain. Lakefront linear park — public access restored across 8km of shoreline. Ferry services to Homa Bay, Mbita, Kendu

	privatised and inaccessible in most sections.	Bay creating a Lake Victoria commuter network.
Waste	Open dumping along the Auji River. No formal organic waste processing. Fish waste from the market — a large and consistent organic feedstock — goes unprocessed.	Organic processing facility using fish market waste as primary feedstock. Kisumu produces enough fish waste alone to justify a biogas facility. Jua Kali Recycling Hub at Kondele.

The Kisumu Signature Intervention

The Kisumu lakefront is the city's most powerful asset and its most wasted one. Eight kilometres of Lake Victoria shoreline running through the city, currently largely inaccessible to residents — privatised, fenced, or degraded. The programme restores the entire lakefront as public space: a linear park from Dunga Beach in the south to the port in the north, with the fish market, the public beach, the boat landing, and the ferry terminal as activated nodes. The lakefront becomes Kisumu's equivalent of Nairobi's river parks — the civic spine that connects the city to its defining natural asset.

THE KISUMU DOCTRINE	Kisumu is poisoning the lake that feeds it. Fix the sewage and the lake recovers. Restore the lakefront and the city has its civic spine. Connect the lake communities by ferry and the region has its transit network. The lake is the answer to every question Kisumu is asking.

NAKURU

City — Kenya's 4th (since 2021)

The Rift Valley Capital: gateway to the Great Rift

Population: 570,000 (city) | Area: 7,495 km² county

The Character of the City

Nakuru is Kenya's fastest-growing major city, elevated to city status in December 2021. It sits at 1,850 metres on the floor of the Eastern Rift Valley, surrounded by the Mau Escarpment to the west, the Aberdares to the east, and flanked by Lake Nakuru — a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its flamingoes. Its economy is based on agriculture, tourism, light manufacturing, and its role as the Rift Valley's commercial hub. Informal settlements account for approximately 40 percent of its population, with poor drainage a primary concern as the city sits in a bowl that collects the Rift Valley's rainfall.

The Specific Diagnosis

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Sewerage	Sewerage coverage approximately 40%. A functioning network exists in the formal city but informal settlement expansion has outpaced it. The Nakuru Municipal Sewerage has a treatment plant but is at capacity.	Trunk sewer expansion following the Njoro River catchment southward and the Makalia River northward — the city's two primary drainage channels. WWTP expansion at Lanet. Condominial systems for Kaptembwa, Flamingo, and Kivumbini informal settlements.
Lake Nakuru	Lake Nakuru's ecosystem is directly threatened by urban wastewater. Sewage, agricultural runoff, and industrial effluent entering the lake damage the alkaline chemistry that the flamingo habitat depends on. The lake is Kenya's single most valuable wildlife-tourism asset per hectare.	Nakuru River Catchment Sewerage Programme: all watercourses feeding Lake Nakuru to have interceptor sewers before they enter the riparian zone. Zero untreated discharge into any Lake Nakuru tributary.
Flooding	The Rift Valley bowl topography concentrates rainfall into Nakuru. The Nakuru Town depression floods regularly. Kaptembwa and Shauri Yako informal settlements are the most affected.	Nakuru Town stormwater master plan. Retention ponds at the Njoro and Makalia river approaches to the city. Underground retention chambers at the worst flood nodes in the CBD.
Transport	Nakuru sits on the Nairobi-Kisumu highway — the busiest road corridor in Kenya. The city's CBD is a truck transit point, creating severe congestion. The Nakuru Bypass is critical but not yet complete.	Nakuru Bypass completion as the primary transport intervention. Cyclic matatu routes redesigned around the bypass as the outer ring. Nakuru bus terminal relocated off the CBD main streets.

Growth management	Nakuru is growing at 4%+ annually. Peripheral expansion toward Njoro, Molo, and Naivasha is unplanned. The peri-urban fringe is replicating the informal settlement pattern that the city is trying to resolve at its core.	Nakuru Metropolitan Planning Authority with statutory powers to enforce the Settlement Code in all growth areas before development occurs. Land banking for public facilities in the growth corridors.
THE NAKURU DOCTRINE	Nakuru's most valuable asset is the lake that shares its name. Every investment in Nakuru's sewerage infrastructure is simultaneously an investment in the tourism economy that Lake Nakuru generates. Clean sewers = clean lake = flamingoes = revenue. The connection is direct.	

ELDORET

City — Kenya's 5th (since 2024)

The Running Capital: home of world athletics

Population: 475,000 (city) | Area: 3,030 km² county

The Character of the City

Eldoret is Kenya's newest city, elevated in August 2024, and its most interesting urban development opportunity. It has Kenya's best existing road network among secondary cities, a functioning commercial economy, and the global brand of Kenyan athletics — the world's greatest distance runners train and live here. Informal settlements account for approximately 30 percent of its population — lower than any comparable Kenyan city — which means the window to get urbanisation right is still partially open. Eldoret's challenge is not remediation. It is prevention: maintaining the advantage it has before it makes the mistakes every other Kenyan city has already made.

The Specific Diagnosis

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Roads	Eldoret has relatively good roads now. The risk is that population growth at 4%+ annually will overwhelm the road network within a decade if no expansion or mass transit planning occurs.	Ring road completion connecting Eldoret's residential periphery. Cyclic matatu routes formalised before the informal system entrenches car dependency. Mass transit planning — Eldoret-Nakuru rail corridor study.
Sewerage	Coverage approximately 50% — better than most Kenyan cities but still leaving half the population unsewered. Expansion is needed ahead of population growth, not behind it.	Pre-emptive sewerage extension into all growth corridors before they are fully developed. The block programme applied to Eldoret means sewers go in with road surfacing, not 20 years after.
Water	Eldoret is close to the Sosiani River and highland catchments. Water supply is generally adequate but the distribution network needs expansion to match growth areas.	Sosiani River storage upgrade. Distribution network extension to peri-urban growth areas. Water supply as a pre-condition for plot registration in new developments.
Athletics economy	Eldoret's global brand is its greatest untapped urban asset. Training camps, athletes, coaches, physiotherapists, nutritionists — a unique economic ecosystem. But the city has no infrastructure that capitalises on this.	Athletics Heritage Centre in the CBD. High-performance training infrastructure open to local youth. Athletics tourism circuit — Kaptagat, Iten, Eldoret — with quality accommodation and facilities. Eldoret Athletics Museum.
Industrial base	Eldoret has Rivatex (textiles), Unga Group, and dairy processing. The industrial area is	Industrial area sewerage and water upgrade as a condition of SEZ

	constrained by poor infrastructure. The proposed Eldoret SEZ needs water, power, and sewerage guarantees.	development. Eldoret positioned as the North Rift manufacturing hub connecting to the Lamu-Ethiopia corridor.
THE ELDORET DOCTRINE	Eldoret has the rarest gift in Kenyan urban development: time. It is not yet broken. Apply the Settlement Code now, before the informal settlements consolidate, before the roads are overwhelmed, before the sewers are bypassed. Prevention is infinitely cheaper than remediation.	

THIKA

Municipality — City Status Candidate

The Industrial Town: Kenya's manufacturing corridor

Population: 251,000 (2019) | Area: Kiambu County

The Character of the City

Thika is Kenya's most important industrial town outside Nairobi — home to Del Monte's pineapple processing, textile manufacturing, steel fabrication, and a rapidly growing logistics sector. It sits 45km northeast of Nairobi on the Thika Superhighway, making it effectively part of the Nairobi metropolitan economy. Its growth is driven by both industrial employment and residential spillover from Nairobi. The peri-urban fringe is developing rapidly and largely unplanned.

The Specific Diagnosis

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Industrial effluent	Thika's rivers — the Thika and Chania — receive significant industrial discharge. Tanning, textile, and food processing effluent enters the rivers without adequate treatment, affecting downstream communities and the Thika Dam reservoir (Nairobi's water supply).	Thika Industrial Effluent Programme: mandatory pre-treatment requirements for all industrial dischargers. Industrial waste treatment facility at the Thika Industrial Area. Real-time effluent monitoring.
Sewerage	Sewerage covers the formal town but peri-urban growth areas are unsewered. Industrial wastewater and domestic sewage combine in the system beyond its design capacity.	Trunk sewer expansion following the Thika River corridor. New WWTP at Gatuanyaga downstream of the industrial area. Peri-urban condominial sewerage.
Transport	The Thika Superhighway is Thika's primary transport asset but the internal road network within the town is poor. Matatu connections to Nairobi are frequent but unregulated.	Thika town internal road network upgrade. Cyclic matatu routes integrated with Nairobi's Thika Road corridor. Thika as the eastern terminus of the Nairobi BRT Thika corridor.
Peri-urban growth	Thika's peri-urban fringe — Kamenu, Gatuanyaga, Makongeni, Miathene — is growing faster than the town core. Informal settlement is consolidating in these areas.	Thika Metropolitan Settlement Code: all new developments in the peri-urban fringe must meet the standard before construction permits are issued. Land banking for schools, health facilities, and public space in the growth corridors.

NYERI
Municipality

The Mountain Town: gateway to Mount Kenya

Population: 119,000 (2019) | Area: Nyeri County

The Character of the City

Nyeri is the capital of Nyeri County and the primary urban centre for the Mount Kenya region. It sits at 1,795 metres on the lower slopes of the Aberdare Range, surrounded by productive agricultural land and close to the Aberdare National Park. Its economy is based on coffee, tea, tourism, and county administration. It is small by national standards but punches above its weight as a service hub for central Kenya's highlands. Its settlement challenges are those of a rapidly growing secondary town rather than a large city — manageable if addressed now.

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Water & Sewerage	Nyeri benefits from good highland water sources but sewerage coverage is inadequate for its growth trajectory. The Nyeri Water and Sanitation Company (NYEWASCO) is functional but under-resourced.	Sewerage expansion following the Chania and Thiba tributary catchments. WWTP upgrade at the existing facility. Peri-urban extension to Ruring'u, Kamakwa, and Kiganjo.
Conservation interface	Nyeri sits adjacent to the Aberdare National Park. Development pressure on the park buffer zone threatens both the conservation asset and the water catchment that supplies the town.	Nyeri Aberdare Buffer Zone Management Plan. Development prohibited within 2km of the park boundary. Riparian buffer restoration on all Aberdare-draining rivers through the town.
Transport	Nyeri's internal roads are generally adequate but connections to satellite towns (Karatina, Othaya, Mukurweini) are poor. Matatu services are unregulated.	Cyclic matatu routes for the Nyeri-Karatina-Othaya triangle. Nyeri-Nairobi express matatu formalisation.
Tourism economy	Nyeri is the gateway to Mount Kenya and the Aberdares — two of Kenya's top tourist destinations. But the town itself captures little of the tourism value.	Nyeri Tourism Centre in the CBD. Facilitated accommodation investment. Cycling and trekking infrastructure connecting Nyeri to Aberdares trails. Trout fishing on the Chania River formalised as a tourism product.

GARISSA

Municipality — ASAL Capital

The Northern Capital: gateway to northeastern Kenya

Population: 190,000 (town) | Area: Garissa County

The Character of the City

Garissa is the administrative and commercial capital of northeastern Kenya — the gateway to Wajir, Mandera, and the Somali border. It sits on the Tana River at the point where the river turns southward after its eastward flow from the highlands. The Tana River is Garissa's primary water source and its primary flood risk simultaneously. The town serves a predominantly Somali and Orma population and is the hub for pastoral trade across the northeastern region. It is also a refugee services hub — Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp, is 100km east.

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Water	Garissa depends on the Tana River for water supply. Treatment is inadequate. The Garissa Water and Sewerage Company serves the formal town but coverage is low. Borehole water is brackish in most areas.	Tana River offtake upgrade with proper treatment facility. Garissa water tower — elevated storage for gravity distribution throughout the town. Extension to rapidly growing peri-urban areas.
Sewerage	Minimal sewerage coverage. Most of the town depends on septic tanks and pit latrines. The Tana River receives the town's waste.	Garissa town sewerage masterplan. Primary trunk along the Tana River corridor. WWTP upstream of the water intake. Septic tank desludging service as an interim measure.
Flooding	Garissa floods severely from the Tana River during the long rains. The 2024 and 2023 floods displaced thousands. The town is built on the Tana's natural floodplain.	Tana River embankment and flood protection works. Riparian buffer enforcement — no new construction within 100m of the Tana bank. Early warning system connected to the Hydrological Intelligence Unit.
Heat & climate	Garissa is one of Kenya's hottest towns — temperatures regularly exceed 40°C. The urban heat island effect from concrete and tarmac is severe. Shade trees are sparse.	Garissa urban greening programme. Mandatory shade tree planting on all roads. Cool roof incentives for commercial buildings. Public shade structures at all markets and transport nodes.
Refugee-town interface	The Dadaab refugee complex creates a unique urban dynamic — a large service population that requires town-level infrastructure but whose needs are often met by humanitarian agencies rather than county government.	Garissa-Dadaab Integrated Services Plan. County government and UNHCR co-investment in shared infrastructure — water, waste, transport. Garissa positioned as the service hub that it functionally already is.

THE GARISSA DOCTRINE	Garissa is the capital of 10% of Kenya's land area. It serves pastoralists, refugees, traders, and county administration. Its infrastructure investment has been chronically below what its strategic role demands. The Settlement Code applies here as everywhere — no exception for remoteness.

ISIOLO

Municipality — ASAL Gateway

The Northern Gateway: where the highlands meet the frontier

Population: 60,000 (town) | Area: Isiolo County

The Character of the City

Isiolo is Kenya's strategic northern gateway — the town where the tarmac road traditionally ended and the frontier began. It sits at 1,100 metres where the highlands drop into the semi-arid north, on the Ewaso Ng'iro River at the point it leaves the highland catchment and enters the lowland plains. Its strategic importance has grown dramatically with the Lamu-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) corridor designating it as a major node — a proposed resort city, an oil pipeline junction, and the southern terminus for the northern transport corridor.

Sector	Current Condition	Programme Intervention
Strategic infrastructure	Isiolo is designated as a LAPSSET corridor hub and a resort city node under Vision 2030. The infrastructure that designation requires — airport upgrade, road connections, utilities — is being built but the settlement fabric of the existing town is not keeping pace.	Isiolo Town Settlement Programme ahead of LAPSSET infrastructure arrival. The corridor investment must land in a town that is already functional. Sewerage, water, roads, waste — built now before the population surge.
Water	The Ewaso Ng'iro highland cascade programme (designed in the water programme) serves Isiolo from the tributary storage dams above. Water supply to the town is included in that programme.	Ewaso Ng'iro highland cascade as the primary water source. Isiolo distribution network expanded to serve the LAPSSET growth areas. Connection to the A2 water corridor northward.
Sewerage	Minimal formal sewerage. The town is growing rapidly ahead of LAPSSET investment. Septage management is the primary current mechanism.	Primary trunk sewer along the Ewaso Ng'iro corridor. WWTP downstream of the town. Condominial sewerage for the informal settlements fringing the LAPSSET zone.
Pastoralist-urban interface	Isiolo is the confluence of pastoral and settled communities. The cattle market is one of East Africa's most important. The town must serve both permanently settled and seasonally transient populations.	Isiolo Livestock Market upgrade — formal pens, water supply, effluent management, veterinary services. The cattle market as economic infrastructure, not a problem to be managed.
Conflict sensitivity	Isiolo sits at the boundary between multiple ethnic and pastoral communities. Resource competition — water, land, grazing — is a perennial tension that urban growth intensifies.	Isiolo Community Land and Resource Management Plan. Settlement Code applied to ensure new development does not appropriate community grazing land. Water infrastructure designed to serve pastoral routes as well as

		settled communities.

TIER 2 AND TIER 3 TOWNS — THE NATIONAL SETTLEMENT GRID

Beyond Kenya's five cities and the major municipalities, there are over 200 towns with populations between 10,000 and 250,000 — the backbone of Kenya's rural-urban transition. These towns receive less than 5% of urban infrastructure investment while housing 35% of Kenya's urban population. The Settlement Programme addresses them through a tiered approach scaled to their size and economic role.

Tier 2 Towns (50,000–250,000)	Kakamega, Kisii, Meru, Machakos, Kitale, Bungoma, Malindi, Kericho, Thika, Naivasha, Ruiru, Kikuyu, Athi River, Ngong, Syokimau. Each gets a scaled Settlement Code application: town sewerage masterplan, complete streets programme, cyclic matatu routes, community waste facility, Maintenance Corps ward unit.
Tier 3 Towns (10,000–50,000)	County headquarters and major market towns across all 47 counties. Each gets: Community Water Trust connection, pit latrine to sanitation upgrade pathway, weekly waste collection, street lighting, matatu terminus infrastructure, and a Community Facilities Standard minimum — primary school, health post, market with sanitation, public open space.
Border Towns	Moyale, Namanga, Busia, Malaba, Taveta, Lunga Lunga, Isebania, Mandera, Wajir. Each border town gets a specific cross-border infrastructure plan — water supply, waste management, and transit infrastructure designed for the dual-country population they serve.
LAPSSET Corridor Towns	Isiolo, Marsabit, Moyale, Garissa, Lamu. Towns along the LAPSSET corridor receive the full city-level settlement treatment ahead of the corridor's population arrival. Infrastructure built before the growth, not after.

The County Settlement Budget Obligation

Every county government in Kenya is required under the Kenya Settlement Code to budget a minimum of 15% of county own-revenue for urban settlement infrastructure and maintenance. The national government matches this through the National Urban Development Fund for counties that meet the budget obligation. Counties that fail to budget adequately do not receive the matching funds.

The Settlement Maintenance Corps deployment cost — the ward-level teams that maintain every street, drain, light, waste point, and public space — is a mandatory county budget line. No discretionary reallocation. The standard is published. The performance is measured. The accountability is real.

The Settlement Code — National Minimum Standards

Street standard	Every classified street: 6m minimum carriageway, 1.5m footpath each side, kerbed drainage, streetlight every 30m, named and numbered. Applied block by block. Exceptions documented.

Water	Piped connection to every plot. Minimum pressure 18 hours per day. Metered. No household pays more than 3% of household income.
Sewerage	Every plot connected where density exceeds 50 units/hectare. Condominial systems where physical constraints prevent conventional sewers.
Waste	Collection point within 200m of every dwelling. Emptied on published weekly schedule. Organic, recyclable, and residual streams separated.
Facilities (400m)	Public open space minimum 500m², waste collection point, streetlighting, potable water point.
Facilities (800m)	Primary school meeting national space standards, dispensary, community market with sanitation, community centre.
Facilities (1.5km)	Secondary school, health centre with maternity, major market, sports ground minimum 1 hectare, mass transit stop.
Maintenance	72-hour response standard for all maintenance failures. Published monthly performance data for every ward in every city and town.

THE RIVER PARK PERFORMANCE STAGES — A NATIONAL PROGRAMME

The river restoration programme creates the parks. The parks create the linear public space. The outdoor performance stages activate the parks as civic destinations. In every city where the settlement programme restores a river corridor, the colosseum-style performance stage is part of the programme — not an addition to it. The same bank terracing that manages flooding is the seating. The same water body that provides recreation hosts the stage.

Nairobi	Five stages: Uhuru Gardens section (city-scale, 15,000), Mathare confluence (12,000, two-bank audience), Kibera valley/Ngong River (20,000, deepest natural amphitheatre), Dandora community stage (8,000), City Park forest theatre (5,000, intimate).
Mombasa	Old Town waterfront stage at the restored creek-side. Tudor Creek amphitheatre using the creek bank terracing. Likoni stage serving south Mombasa communities.
Kisumu	Lakefront performance stage at the restored Winam Gulf shoreline. Auji River bank stage serving Manyatta and Nyalenda. Capacity for Kisumu's vibrant Ohangla and Benga music culture.
Nakuru	Njoro River linear park stage. Lake Nakuru viewpoint amphitheatre — using the natural escarpment above the lake as the backdrop. Capacity for the Rift Valley's cultural calendar.
Eldoret	Sosiani River bank stage. Athletics-themed performance space adjacent to the proposed Athletics Heritage Centre. The running culture expressed in built form.
Secondary cities	Every Tier 2 town river restoration programme includes a community-scale stage (2,000–5,000 capacity). Scaled to the local community, designed using local materials, commissioned from local Jua Kali craftspeople.

The Design Standard for All River Park Stages

- Stage at water level. Engineered bank tiers as seating — the flood management terracing formalised as civic infrastructure.
- No enclosure. No ticketing barriers. Anyone walking the linear park passes through. Revenue from licensed performances, not restricted access.
- Local materials and local craft. Jua Kali sector commissions for stage structures, seating surfaces, shade structures, and lighting.
- Mural walls on stage back surfaces — designated and commissioned, changed periodically. The performance stage and the visual arts programme are the same investment.
- Acoustic design uses the curved bank and the water naturally. Amplification provided. Space also works acoustically without it for intimate performance.
- Adjacent Jua Kali workspace — the creative economy that performs in the space also builds and maintains it.

THE DOCTRINE	A community that has a world-class civic space on its riverbank will protect that river. The best flood management instrument is a community that has something to lose if

	the river floods destructively. The colosseum is not just culture. It is flood management.

CLOSING: ONE KENYA, ONE STANDARD

Mombasa's Old Town has been waiting for proper sewerage since Kenya's independence. Kisumu has been poisoning Lake Victoria for decades. Garissa is the capital of 10% of Kenya's land area and receives infrastructure investment as if it were a minor market town. Eldoret has the rarest gift in Kenyan urban development — time to get it right — and risks wasting it through inaction.

Every city in this programme has its own geography, its own economy, its own culture, its own specific infrastructure deficit. The Settlement Code is not a template that erases those differences. It is the minimum that every community deserves regardless of those differences.

The Old Town in Mombasa and the informal settlement in Kisumu both deserve a drain that doesn't block. A streetlight that works. A waste collection point that is emptied on schedule. A water connection with pressure. A sewer that doesn't overflow. That is not a high standard. It is the minimum. It is what the programme delivers — in every city, in every town, in every ward.

Every city. Every town. To the same standard. For everyone.

Mji ni Watu. Tunaujenga. Tunauendesha.